# GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
# PLANNING
# LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2682
ANSWERED ON:08.08.2001
DEVELOPMENT OF W.B.
RUPCHAND MURMU

**Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:**

(a) whether the Chief Minister of West Bengal in a recent meeting with Prime Minister has sought the Centre`s co-operation in the development of the State;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the action taken by the Government in this regard?

## Answer

MINISTER OF STATE (INDEPENDENT CHARGE) OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DISINVESTMENT, MINISTER OF STATE MINISTRIES OF PLANNING, STATISTICS & PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATIVE REFORMS AND PUBLIC GRIEVANCES (SHRI ARUN SHOURIE)

(a) to (c): The Chief Minister, West Bengal, in a recent Meeting with the Prime Minister,on the 30th May, 2001 submitted a Memorandum. A statement, showing the details of the issues raised and indicating their status of implementation, is enclosed.

Statement referred to in Parts (a) to (c) of the Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 2682 for answer on 8-8-2001

| Issue | Present status |
|---|---|
| 1. No wagon orders have been released for 2000-2001 by Railways Ministry. Wagon industry, in public and private sectors, are in serious crisis. Railway budget for 2001-2002 provides for procurement of 23,000 Four Wheeler Units (FWUs). A drastic curtailment of the procurement programme is apprehended. | Initially, certain checks had revealed use of the cheaper, mild steel in place of the Corten Steel, supplied by the Railways to the wagon manufacturers, as a free supply item. While the Tender case for wagons for 2001-02 was close to finalisation, similar use of mild steel in place of the specified Corten Steel by some more manufacturers was detected by the Vigilance, which warranted more comprehensive checks by the representative of the wagon manufacturers, RDSO and Vigilance, in order to assess the quantum and magnitude of the problem. During 2000-01, Ministry of Railways released a fresh order for 21,225 FWUs. Against the total order of 24,750 FWUs (including outstanding order of 3,525), 15,425 FWUs were produced. As against the budgetary provision of 23,000 FWUs for 2001-02, 17,000 and 6,000 FWUs are to be acquired through Railways` own resources and the Own Your Wagon Scheme (OYWS) & the Built Own Lease-Transfer (BOLT) Schemes respectively. An order for 2,460 FWUs under +30% Option Clause against 2001-02 contract was released for 2001-02. Another 2000 FWUs have been ordered on Railways workshops making the total coverage of about 12,000 FWUs for the year 2001-02. |
| 2. Production target of Chittaranjan Locomotive Works (CLW) is being gradually reduced by Railways Ministry resulting in reduced man | Ministry of Railways estimate the requirement of electric locomotives on the basis of traffic projections for |

hours and labour redundancy. In 1998-99, CLW produced 165 locomotives. The target was reduced to 108 in 1999-2000, subsequently increased to 120. For 2000-2001, the target was fixed at 94. In the Railways budget for 2001-2002, the target has been reduced to 90 and after the recent review, the target has been further reduced to 67 only.

each year and the trends of their utilization. This practice has been followed for 2001-2002 also.

3. In 1998, Eastern Coalfields Limited (ECL) decided to close down 64 coal mines - mostly located in West Bengal and some in Bihar. In response to Chief Minister`s letter, Minister for Coal offered a few options to the State Government which were found unacceptable. The State Government has requested Government of India to formulate a revival plan for ECL in consultation with all the agencies concerned including the State Government and trade unions. Ministry of Finance, on financial restructuring of ECL is being examined by the Ministry of Coal.

Because of substantial increase in the accumulated losses, M/s Eastern Coalfields Ltd. referred itself to BIFR once again, on 17.11.99. After hearing its case on 30.8.2000, BIFR have declared ECL as a Sick company and appointed State Bank of India as the Operating Agency to prepare a revival plan for the Company.The Appraisal Report of the Department of Expenditure, business and

4. Indifferent attitude of Government of India towards their own Public Sector Undertakings which are mostly located in West Bengal.

There are 19 PSUs, located in West Bengal, 4 out of which are in profits, whereas, 15 are incurring losses. 46,253 persons are employed in these PSUs and during 2000-01, the value of production from these PSUs was Rs.2426 crore with a net loss of Rs.532.70 crore which is lower than the respective losses of Rs.635.86 crore and Rs.657.09 crore, incurred during 1999-2000 and 1998-99.

5. Discontinuance of Aeroflot flights from Kolkata International airport. These flights should be restored.

Aeroflot`s decision to withdraw services from Kolkata has been prompted by commercial considerations. Government is not in a position to interfere in this regard, as foreign Airlines decide their routing etc. according to their commercial judgement.

6. Discontinuance of Indian Airlines flights through Kolkata International airport to Singapore. These flights should be restored.

Low level of traffic has prompted Indian Airlines to restructure its interntional operations passing through Kolkata. However, presently, Indian Airlines provide an over-night connection between Kolkata and Singapore over Bangkok and a `same day` connection in the return direction on four days of a week. In addition to this, Indian Airlines provide daily connection between Kolkata and Chennai with onward daily connection to Singapore.

7. Daily flights from Kolkata to Bagdogra since the runway at Bagdogra has been repaired and the airport modernized.

Indian Airlines have restored the `thrice a week` operation on Kolkata - Bagdogra - Kolkata sector. Indian Airlines also undertake additional operations from time to time between Kolkata and Bagdogra keeping in view the seasonal passenger demand.